



This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding"  
Darling, has become the symbol of  
the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 97-million acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of more than 548 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance Program which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans provide long term guidance for management decisions and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies needed to accomplish refuge purposes and identify the Service's best estimate of future needs. These plans detail program planning levels that are sometimes substantially above current budget allocations and, as such, are primarily for Service strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. The plans do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# Nomans Land Island National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Assessment and Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan

May 2010

## Refuge Vision Statement

We envision Nomans Land Island NWR to be a vital and unique maritime resource for migratory birds along the Atlantic Flyway. Our management will perpetuate the diversity of nesting, resting, and foraging habitats used by passerines, raptors, waterfowl and seabirds throughout the island. In particular, species of regional conservation concern including the peregrine falcon will benefit from land which is free from mammalian predators and from present-day human disturbances.

Nomans Land Island has a culturally rich human history that began thousands of years ago and our management will ensure that this legacy endures. Culturally sensitive management actions on the island, and strong partnerships with the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and other partners, will foster cultural awareness and an appreciative and knowledgeable public.

With its recent history of human use, Nomans Land Island NWR will be a place few people can experience firsthand; yet we will provide meaningful alternatives for members of the public to experience the beauty and singularity of the Refuge. Through partnerships, education, interpretation and outreach, we hope to instill a sense of wonder about complex and dynamic coastal ecosystems, and underscore the value of the Refuge in conserving those resources.

# Nomans Land Island National Wildlife Refuge Environmental Assessment and Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan

May 2010

Type of Action:	Administrative – Development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Lead Agency:	U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
Location:	Nomans Land Island National Wildlife Refuge Chilmark, MA
Administrative Headquarters:	Eastern Massachusetts NWR Complex Sudbury, MA
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This Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) analyzes three alternatives for managing the 628 acre Nomans Land Island National Wildlife Refuge over the next 15 years. This document also contains nine appendices that provide additional information supporting our analysis. Following is a brief overview of each alternative:

Alternative A: This alternative is referred to as our “No Action” or “Current Management” alternative, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This alternative would maintain the status quo in managing this 628 acre refuge for the next 15 years. No major changes would be made to current management practices.

Alternative B: This alternative goes beyond the proposed actions in Alternative A, and features more active monitoring and habitat management to promote species of conservation concern. This would be facilitated through more frequent visits to the Refuge. An increase in off-site programming, interpretation and outreach would enhance our visitor services program. Strengthening partnerships and proposing new staff would build capacity for these endeavors.

Alternative C: This is the Service-preferred alternative. It represents the planning team’s recommended strategies and actions for achieving Refuge purposes, vision and goals and responding to public issues. Here, the biological program would focus on more targeted management to benefit prioritized species of conservation concern. Off-site visitor services would be somewhat increased from current levels. In addition, this alternative includes a proposal for wilderness designation for the Refuge. As in Alternative B, strengthening partnerships is a Refuge priority.

# Table of Contents

Chapter 1 The Purpose of and Need for Action	Page
Introduction.....	1-1
The Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action .....	1-6
The Service and the Refuge System: Policies and Mandates Guiding Planning.....	1-7
Conservation Plans and Initiatives Guiding the Project.....	1-15
Refuge Establishing Purposes, Land Acquisition History, and Boundary .....	1-22
Refuge Administration.....	1-22
Refuge Vision Statement.....	1-24
Refuge Goals .....	1-24
The Comprehensive Conservation Planning Process.....	1-25
Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities .....	1-27
Issues and Concerns Outside the Scope of this Analysis or Not Completely Within the Jurisdiction of the Service .....	1-30
 Chapter 2 Alternatives Considered, Including the Service-preferred Alternative	
Introduction.....	2-1
Formulating Alternatives .....	2-1
Actions Common to All of the Alternatives .....	2-2
Alternatives or Actions Considered but Eliminated from Further Study .....	2-15
Alternative A: Current Management .....	2-16
Alternative B: Enhanced Wildlife Management and Visitor Services .....	2-27
Alternative C: Natural Processes Emphasis, Focal Species Management, and Wilderness Designation (Service-Preferred Alternative) .....	2-51
 Chapter 3 Affected Environment	
Introduction.....	3-1
The Physical Landscape.....	3-1
Land Use History.....	3-11
Current Conditions.....	3-15
The Regional Socio-Economic Setting.....	3-23
Refuge Administration.....	3-24
Refuge Natural Resources.....	3-28
Refuge Biological Resources .....	3-33
Refuge Visitor Services Program .....	3-38
Refuge Archaeological and Cultural Resources .....	3-39
Refuge Wilderness Resources.....	3-40
 Chapter 4 Environmental Consequences	
Introduction.....	4-1
Effects on Air Quality.....	4-2
Effects on Water Quality .....	4-4
Effects on Soils.....	4-6
Effects on Shrub Habitat .....	4-7
Effects on Vegetated Dune Habitat.....	4-11

Chapter 4 Environmental Consequences (continued)	Page
Effects on Marine Intertidal Beach/Rocky Shore .....	4-13
Effects on Scrub-Shrub and Emergent Wetlands, Bogs, and Open Water Habitat.....	4-14
Effects on Public Access, Education and Community Outreach .....	4-15
Effects on Cultural and Archaeological Resources.....	4-17
Wilderness Recommendations and Designation.....	4-19
Effects on Socio-Economic Resources.....	4-21
Cumulative Impacts .....	4-23
Relationship between Short-term Uses of the Human Environment and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity.....	4-27
Unavoidable Adverse Effects.....	4-27
Potential Irreversible and Irrecoverable Commitments of Resources.....	4-27
Environmental Justice .....	4-28

Chapter 5 Consultation and Coordination with Others	
Introduction.....	5-1
Planning to Protect Land and Resources .....	5-1
Partners Involved in Refuge Planning .....	5-2
Contact Information .....	5-3
Planning Team .....	5-3
Other Service Program Involvement .....	5-4

Glossary & Acronyms	
Acronyms .....	Glos-1
Glossary .....	Glos-3

Bibliography .....	Biblio-1
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Appendices	
Appendix A: Species and Habitats of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	A-1
Appendix B: Species Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	B-1
Appendix C: Wilderness Review .....	C-1
Appendix D: Refuge Operations Needs (RONS) and Service Asset Maintenance Management Systems (SAMMS) .....	D-1
Appendix E: Staffing Charts.....	E-1
Appendix F: Fire Management Program Guidance .....	F-1
Appendix G: Transfer Agreement .....	G-1
Appendix H: Summary of U.S. Navy Environmental Programs on Nomans Land Island.....	H-1
Appendix I: SLAMM (Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model) Analysis.....	I-1

List of Figures	
Figure 1.1. The NEPA Planning Process.....	1-25

## List of Tables

Table 1.1. History of land acquisition for Nomans Land Island Refuge .....	1-22
Table 2.1. Matrix of the Alternatives .....	2-67
Table 3.1. From Application of the Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM 5.0) to Nomans Land Island NWR report (Clough and Larson 2009). Indicates the losses in Refuge lands characterized as Dry Land, Swamp or Ocean Beach under the four different sea level rise scenarios by 2100. ....	3-17
Table 3.2. Modified from Application of the Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM 5.0) to Nomans Land Island NWR report (Clough and Larson 2009). Indicates initial acreage of Refuge lands by habitat classification, and the projected change in acreage in each category by 2100 according to the four sea level rise scenarios.. ....	3-18
Table 3.3. Annual Refuge Revenue Payments for Nomans Land Island NWR.....	3-23
Table 3.4. Fiscal year funding for the Eastern Massachusetts NWR Complex for 2007 to 2010 by type.....	3-24
Table 3.5. Sample of special use permits for Nomans Island NWR since 2004 .....	3-27
Table 3.6. State-Listed Plants on Nomans Land Island.....	3-32
Table 3.7. Invasive species documented on Nomans Land Island NWR.....	3-33
Table 4.1. Matrix of Environmental Consequences by Alternative .....	4-29
Table A.1. Bird Species of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge ....	A-1
Table A.2. Fish Species of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge ....	A-7
Table A.3. Amphibian and Reptile Species of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	A-8
Table A.4. Invertebrate Species of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	A-9
Table A.5. Plant Species of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	A-10
Table A.6. Plant Communities of Conservation Concern Known or Suspected on the Refuge .....	A-11
Table B.1. Plants Identified at the Refuge.....	B-1
Table B.2. Birds Identified at the Refuge .....	B-13
Table B.3. Mammals Identified at the Refuge .....	B-18
Table B.4. Fish Identified at or in the surroundings waters of the Refuge.....	B-19
Table B.5. Amphibians and Reptiles Identified at the Refuge .....	B-22
Table B.6. Invertebrates Identified at the Refuge .....	B-23
Table C.1. Wilderness Inventory Area Findings Summary for Nomans Land Island Unit.....	C-7
Table D.1. Proposed projects currently in RONS database (FY08) .....	D-1
Table D.2. New projects proposed for RONS database for Nomans Land Island Under Alternative C .....	D-1
Table D.3. New projects proposed for SAMMS database for Nomans Land Island NWR under Alternative C. ....	D-2

## List of Maps

Map 1-1. Nomans Land Island NWR Refuge Boundary .....	1-3
Map 1-2. 1938 Aerial Photo of Nomans Land Island NWR.....	1-4
Map 1-3. Location of Nomans Land Island NWR.....	1-5
Map 2-1. Proposed Interpretive Trail-Alternative B .....	2-30

List of Maps (continued)	Page
Map 3-1. Conservation Regions .....	3-3
Map 3-2. USFWS Land Conservation Cooperatives .....	3-5
Map 3-3. Conserved Lands in the vicinity of Nomans Land Island NWR.....	3-6
Map 3.4. Nomans Land Island NWR Habitat Classes.....	3-29
Map C-1. Wilderness Study Area .....	C-11